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**Congress of the United States**  
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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS  
AND CONSUMER CREDIT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND  
COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY

June 7, 2007

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary of State  
United States Department of State  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

As you are no doubt aware, implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), specifically the processing of passport applications, has been an unacceptable failure. Over the past few weeks, my office has been inundated with requests for assistance from frustrated vacationers, students and professionals experiencing excessive delays in receiving passports due to backlogs at the passport agency processing centers.

In May 2007 my offices took in more than 200 individual passport cases. Before implementation of WHTI we averaged a single passport case per month. On May 23, 2007 your spokesman issued a statement claiming that passport production was keeping pace with demand. I can report to you that the experience of hundreds of my constituents suggests a different reality.

Up to ten percent of those who have contacted us have been forced to cancel or reschedule travel plans. In some cases, the cancellations of trips, planned months in advance, are costing thousands of dollars. Apparently only one telephone number exists for people to call to check on the status of applications. That line is busy most of the time and tells callers, "We are busy helping other travelers," and then hangs up. I have heard numerous complaints that when callers are able to speak to someone, the customer service representatives are rude, less than helpful, and completely ill-equipped to be handling these issues.

The government had ample time to prepare for the expected increase in passport applications. The incompetence with which this has been handled is unacceptable. This problem is not unique to Kentucky's Fourth Congressional District. I am aware that many of my colleagues have also written to you about this issue.

Please advise us all how you plan to address this issue expeditiously. My constituents and I await your prompt reply. You may call me at 202-225-3465.

Sincerely,



Geoff Davis  
Member of Congress

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